

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An elastic article comprising
  - a) an active ingredient;
  - 5 b) a matrix formed from a polymeric material and a plasticiser, provided that when the plasticiser consists of water, the level is at least 3% by weight, whereby the article is capable of delivering the active to a liquid environment, and whereby the matrix has a glass transition temperature ( $T_g$ ) below  $50^{\circ}\text{C}$ , preferably below  $40^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and whereby the active ingredient or part thereof may be present in the  
10 matrix.
2. An article as in claim 1 whereby the active ingredient is active in aqueous environment and the article is water-dispersable, water-disintegrating or water-soluble, preferably the matrix is water-soluble.  
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3. An article according to claim 1 or 2 whereby the matrix has a  $T_g$  between  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $20^{\circ}\text{C}$ , preferably even between  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $10^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and an elastic modulus of less than  $1 \text{ GN.m}^{-2}$ , preferably less than  $0.1 \text{ GN.m}^{-2}$ , or even less than  $0.01 \text{ GN.m}^{-2}$ .  
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4. An elastic article according to any of claims 1 to 3, which is in the form of a foam which is a stable upon contact with air and unstable upon contact with water, said elastic foam article preferably having an elastic modulus of less than  $0.1 \text{ GN.m}^{-2}$  or even below  $0.01 \text{ GN.m}^{-2}$ .  
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5. An elastic article according to any preceding claim comprising from 30% to 90% by weight of the matrix and from 5% to 70% by weight of water and from 1% to 15% by weight of a plasticiser, preferably including at least 3% by weight of free moisture.  
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6. An article according to any of claims 1 to 5 obtainable by a process comprising the step of
- a) obtaining a mixture of a polymeric material and a plasticiser, preferably water and another plasticiser;
  - 5 b) chemically or physically introducing gas in said mixture of polymeric material and water;
  - c) prior to step b) and/or simultaneously with step b) and/ or subsequently to step b), addition of the active ingredient to the mixture of polymer material and water;
  - 10 d) shaping of articles of the resulting mixture of step c);
- whereby preferably one or more of steps a) to d) are followed or accompanied by removal of part of the water, if present.
7. An article according to claim 6, whereby step c) of the process as in claim 6
- 15 comprises the step of obtaining a body comprising the active ingredient or part thereof and enclosing said body with the mixture of step b).
8. An article as in claim 6 or 7 whereby in step a) the mixture is an aqueous mixture and after or in step b), c) and/ or d) of claim 6 part of the water is removed such
- 20 that the resulting article comprises at least 3% by weight of free-moisture.
9. An elastic article according to claim 4, whereby the foam article comprises cells, obtainable by a process comprising the steps of
- a) formation of a mixture of the polymeric material, the active material, plasticiser
  - 25 and a liquid, whereby the liquid and the plasticiser may be the same compound;
  - b) shaping of bodies from the mixture of claim b) and
  - b) evaporation of the liquid or part thereof to form spacings in the mixture which form the inner area of the cells of the article,
- whereby step c) is preferably conducted by freeze drying or by heating the bodies,
- 30 thereby causing the liquid or part thereof to evaporate.

10. An elastic article according to any preceding claim whereby the polymeric material comprises a water-soluble polymer, preferably a polyvinylalcohol.
- 5 11. An elastic article according to any preceding claim which has a relative density of 0.05 to 0.9, preferably 0.3 to 0.7.
12. An elastic article according to any preceding claim comprising closed and open cells, preferably the ratio of closed to open cells being at least 1:1.
- 10 13. An elastic article according to any preceding claim whereby the active ingredient is a cleaning product ingredient, fabric care ingredient, pharmaceutical ingredient or cosmetic ingredient, preferably selected from enzymes, perfumes, surfactants, brighteners, dyes, suds suppressers, bleaches, bleach activators, fabric softeners, fabric conditioners, antibacterial agents, effervescing systems and mixtures thereof.
- 15 14. An elastic article according to claim 13 whereby the active ingredient comprising at least an enzyme.
- 20 15. An elastic article according to any preceding claim which is in the form of a granule, bead or tablet.
16. A according to claim 15 in the form of a particle or bead having a mean particle size of from 50 to 4000 microns, preferably from 100 to 1500 microns.
- 25 17. An elastic article according to any preceding claim, comprising a cleaning composition, fabric care composition cosmetic composition or pharmaceutical composition.

18. A cleaning composition, fabric care composition, cosmetic composition, personal care composition or pharmaceutical composition comprising the elastic article according to any of claims 1 to 16.
19. A process as in claim 6, 7 or 9.
- 5 20. A process as in claim 19 comprising the step of introducing gas in a mixture comprising at least the polymeric material, water, another plasticiser and optionally the active ingredient to form a foam and subsequently forming particles, beads or tablets from the foam, by use of a spraying process, extrusion process, moulding process or micropastillation process, the process comprising
- 10 at least one drying step.
21. Use of an elastic article according to any of claims 2 to 17 to deliver active ingredients to an aqueous environment, preferably the active ingredients being
- 15 detergent active ingredients and the aqueous environment being the wash water.
22. Use of a elastic article according to any of claims 2 to 17 in cleaning compositions, fabric care compositions, personal care compositions, cosmetic compositions or pharmaceutical compositions, preferably to incorporate therein
- 20 active ingredients selected from enzymes, perfumes, surfactants, brighteners, dyes, suds suppressers, bleaches, bleach activators, fabric softeners, fabric conditioners, antibacterial agents, effervescing systems, and mixtures thereof